INTERIM ANNUAL REPORT

UPON THE

HEALTH OF WOLVERHAMPTON

FOR THE YEAR 1939

BY

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SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

AREA OF THE BOROUGH		9,115 Acres.
POPULATION (Registrar General's estimate 1939).	.... Birth Rate - 147,[illegible]	
	.... Death Rate - 140,[illegible]	
(Census, 1931)		1[illegible],812
NUMBER OF INHABITED HOUSES		4[illegible],5[illegible]
RATEABLE VALUE		2[illegible],143
Sum represented by a Penny Rate		2[illegible],760

	Total.	Male.	Female.		
LIVE BIRTHS) Legitimate	2411	1229	1182	BIRTH)	
) Illegitimate	76	43	33	RATE)	16.9
STILL BIRTHS	93	50	43		
Rate per 1,000 Total Births					36.0
DEATHS	1602	840	762	DEATH) RATE)	11.

NATURAL INCREASE OF POPULATION
(Excess of births over deaths in the year)... .... [illegible]

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.	Deaths		
(a) Puerperal Sepsis	1	RATE PER)	0.[illegible]
(b) Other Puerperal Causes.	10	1,000 BIRTHS)	3.[illegible]
DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR PER 1,000 BIRTHS (Legitimate	(116)	....	4[illegible]
(Illegitimate	(11)	....	1[illegible]
(Total	(127)	....	[illegible]1
DEATH RATE from Measles (7)			0.[illegible]
" " Whooping Cough (0)			0.[illegible]
" " Diarrhoea and Enteritis (13) (under 2 yrs. per 1,000 Births)			5.[illegible]
" " Cancer (210)			1.4[illegible]
" " Respiratory Tuberculosis (88)			0.[illegible]
" " all forms of Tuberculosis (94)..			[illegible]

NOTE The figures in the above Table are those supplied by the Registrar General.

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of midwives in the town in 1939, and no application was made to the Board to restore to the roll the name of any midwife who had voluntarily surrendered her certificate in order that she might resume practice during the war.

(b) THE MUNICIPAL DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY SERVICE.

An average of sixteen municipal midwives were employed. Between them they attended 1,307 cases and paid 47,450 visits to their patients. They also booked 1,493 new cases for future attendance. The average number of cases attended by a midwife during the year was 86 and the average number of visits paid by a midwife was just under 3,660.

(c) MATERNAL MORTALITY.

There were eleven maternal deaths during the year, giving a maternal mortality rate of 4.27 . There were three deaths from eclampsia and one from toxaemia of pregnancy. One patient died from haemorrhage following abortion, one from ruptured ectopic gestation and one from quinine poisoning self administered. In none of the three latter cases had either doctor or midwife been employed.

(d) ANTE-NATAL CARE.

The Municipal Ante-Natal clinics were kept open as usual after the outbreak of war. Whilst there was a slight falling off in attendances at the clinics, an increased number of women accepted the alternative of ante-natal care by medical practitioners. The total number of new cases attending the clinics in 1939 was 866 and the total number of examinations by private doctors was, first examinations 925, second examinations 749. During 1939 the total number of deliveries was 3,151, of these 2,533 are known to have had medical care under the following heads during pregnancy

Attended Ante-Natal Clinic	866
Attended Women's Hospital Ante-Natal Clinic	313
Examined under General Practitioners' Scheme	925
Confined in Nursing Homes (own doctor engaged)	394

(e) HEALTH VISITING.

When war broke out the Infant Welfare Centres were temporarily closed. In October, Arrangements were made for babies to attend the various clinics at staggered hours in the morning for interview by their Health Visitor. Babies picked out those cases which needed seeing by the Doctor, and they were given an afternoon appointment. In this way the number of persons present on clinic premises at any one time was considerably reduced. Mothers were instructed to go home as soon as they had seen the doctor, and social amenities which might have encouraged them to linger were suspended. The temporary closure of the clinics reduced the total attendances registered during the year, but there was an increase in the amount of home visiting by Health Visitors.

(f) CHILDREN [illegible].

On December 31st, 1939, there were 51 children under the care of 50 foster mothers. One foster child was dealt with under Section 51 (1) of the Public Health Act, 1936. The Court found that the foster mother was unfitted to have the care of young children and that the condition of the home was unsatisfactory. The child was handed back to its mother.

[illegible] C.

[illegible]

As requested by Ministry of Health Circular No.2067, the detailed information required in this Section is omitted from this report although particulars have been set out as usual, and are being filed for reference purposes, including Certificates re escape in case of fire, for factories, action under the Slums Act, 1934, canal boats, rat infestation, rag flock, caravans, etc. etc.

(1) OVERCROWDING.

The erection of 100 houses specifically allocated for the remedy of overcrowding was completed during the year. There were 309 cases of overcrowding abated by displacements under the Housing Act, or by the transference of families to Council houses. In four cases it was necessary to serve notice under Section 59 or 66 of the Act, before the overcrowding was remedied.

(2) SMOKE ABATEMENT.

A Bye-law under Section 104(1) of the Public Health Act, 1936, was confirmed by the Minister of Health on June 24th, 1938, prescribing that the emission of black smoke from any factory chimney for more than three minutes in any period of thirty minutes, shall be a nuisance under Section 103 (s.s.4) of the Act.

(3) VERMIN [illegible].

On the outbreak of war the Council's scheme of disinfestation was immediately suspended, but arrangements were made with the Dudley Council to take over the work on one day per week, thus permitting disinfestation to continue in more serious cases. During 1939 furniture and effects of 340 families were subjected to treatment by Hydro-Cyanic Acid under to transfer to Corporation houses.

(4) [illegible].

During 1939, 31 families were treated at the Cleansing Station at South Tyne for infection of scabies, comprising a total of 155 persons.

(5) OTHER INVESTIGATIONS.

Summary of action taken during 1939 :-

Description of Trade.	Applications Received. New Prem's.	Applications Received. Renewals.	Permits Granted. New Prem's.	Permits Granted. Renewals.	Statutorily dis-established.	On Register 31st Dec. 1939.
Bone Boiler	-	-	-	-	-	1
Fat Melter or Extractor	-	1	-	1	-	2
Fellmonger and Hide or Skin Dealer	-	1	-	1	-	2
Fish Fryer	7	20	2	20	3	56
Gut Scraper	-	1	-	1	-	2
Rag, Bone and Skin Dealer	-	1	-	1	-	3
Tripe Boiler	-	3	-	3	1	4
Totals	7	27	2	27	4	70

Five applications to establish the trade of Fish Frying were not acceded to by the Town Planning Committee.

On the outbreak of war action under the Housing Act, 1936 was suspended and no further representations were made in connection with individual unfit houses or clearance areas. The Council had certain contracts in hand involving the erection of some 300 houses, and as work on those contracts had progressed to a varying extent arrangements were made for these to be completed and utilised for rehousing families living in dwellings considered to be ~~strurally~~ structurally dangerous.

CLEARANCE AREAS.

The Moseley Village Clearance Scheme which had been represented in 1938 and confirmed by the Minister in October of the same year involved demolition of 180 dwelling houses. Recognising the unusual situation of this area the Council had decided to defer displacement of the families until adjoining land in Willenhall Road had been acquired and levelled. This latter project had to be suspended on the outbreak of war but as many of the houses included in the area were in a structural dangerous condition it became necessary to displace the families from them in the latter part of 1939, and allot the houses on Estates situated as near as possible to Moseley Village.

The remaining large slum area in the town (Dale Street) was represented at the beginning of 1939 and a Public Enquiry was held in August of the same year. This scheme included 5 separate areas covering 13.177 acres and having a density of 34.8 houses to the acre. The total number of houses in the scheme were 473 and the total number of persons affected ~~were~~ was 1,698. On the outbreak of war the Minister intimated that Clearance and Compulsory Purchase Orders in respect of this area would not be confirmed until the cessation of hostilities, unless the Council had special reasons to advance for dealing with certain of the houses immediately. As approximately one third of the houses are in a serious state of disrepair and structurally dilapidated the Corporation have urged the Minister to confirm the Order relating to No.1 area which includes the whole of the central block where the worst houses are situated. The following table shows the progress of Clearance Schemes in Wolverhampton during the past fifteen years :-

Statute	Scheme.	Houses Demolished (Pink and Green) During 1939	Houses Demolished (Pink and Green) Total to Date	Persons Displaced (Pink and Green) During 1939	Persons Displaced (Pink and Green) Total to Date	Remarks.
'sing Acts, 1890. and 1919.	Faulkland Street Improvement Area C.P.O.	-	279	-	1,498	Scheme completed.
'sing Act, 1930.	Brickkiln Croft Area: C.P.O.	-	165	-	732	" "
do.	Walsall Street (West) Area: C.P.O.	-	455	-	2,146	" "
do.	Cannon Street Area : C.P.O.	-	5	-	21	" "
do.	Walsall Street (East) Area: C.P.O.	5	449	8	1,679	" "
do.	Wood Street (No.1) Area:C.P.O.	-	16	-	55	" "
do.	Wood Street (No.2) Area:Cl.O.	-	13	-	64	" "
do.	Shrubbery Street Area: C.P.O.	-	21	-	86	" "
do.	Wood Street Area: C.P.O.	-	11	-	50	" "
do.	Navigation Street Area: C.P.O.	-	45	-	170	" "
'sing Act, 1935.	Monmore Green (No.1) Area: C.P.O.	148	268	593	1,100	26 houses await demolition.
do.	Monmore Green (No.1A) Area: Cl.O.	-	7	-	30	Scheme completed.
do.	Monmore Green (No.2) Area: C.P.O.	-	9	-	44	" "
do.	Monmore Green (No.2A) Area: Cl.O.	2	5	5	16	" "
do.	Monmore Green (No.3) Area: C.P.O.	13	13	44	44	" "
do.	Monmore Green (No.4) Area: C.P.O.	28	28	113	113	" "
do.	Moseley Village (No.1) Area: C.P.O.	4	6	24	35	1[illegible] houses awaiting demolition.
	TOTALS	200	1,793	785	7,[illegible]	

PART II. INDIVIDUAL UNFIT HOUSES.

During 1938 there were 475 houses represented as unfit; 227 Demolition Orders were made including 18 which became operative because of the owners default to comply with a Statutory Undertaking. The number of Statutory Undertakings accepted by the Council was 110, of which 105 were for reconditioning and the remainder were to discontinue use for human habitation. During the year one appeal was made to the County Court in respect of two houses upon which Demolition Orders had been made by the Council :-

<u>81, Inkerman Street</u> - Resolved :- Appeal withdrawn and Demolition Order carried into effect.

<u>82, Inkerman Street</u> - Resolved :- Appeal allowed by consent. House to be reconditioned in accordance with Council's original specifications. Adjourned on undertaking that work would be completed within four months. The house partially collapsed before any work was carried out by the owner, and after adjournment the appeal was dismissed, and the house demolished.

During 1939 a total of 384 houses were demolished pursuant to Demolition Orders in addition to 41 which were pulled down voluntarily. Total number of persons displaced - 1,555.

<u>NEW HOUSING ACCOMMODATION.</u>

Particulars received from the Borough Engineer show that 310 houses were built by the Corporation and 740 by private enterprise during the year.

SECTION 4.

INSPECTION AND CONTROL OF FOOD SUPPLY.

(a) MILK SUPPLY.

Seven summonses again st Retailers were issued during the year for breach of various provisions of the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926. Fines of 5/- or 20/- were imposed in each case. On December 31st, 1939, there were 775 persons registered as Retail Purveyors of Milk, 46 persons registered as Wholesale Purveyors or Producers and 162 premises registered as cow sheds or dairies. During 1939 98 licences were in force for milk to be sold under one of the special designations.

Routine bacteriological examinations were continued throughout the year and all unsatisfactory results were followed up. 68 samples were examined for the presence of living tubercle bacilli of which 10 were reported positive giving a percentage of 11.4. 14 Bovine animals were slaughtered as a result of following up these positive samples.

(b) MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

On the outbreak of war the Wolverhampton Abattoir was officially designated for slaughtering under the Centralised Scheme. It then became necessary to employ the equivalent of the whole-time services of one Sanitary Inspector on meat inspection in addition to those of a full-time Meat Inspector.

(c) FOOD & DRUGS ACT.

There were 197 samples of milk taken for analysis including 60 informal samples. Of this number 17 formal and 6 informal were reported to be adulterated. 14 of these milk samples were the subject of prosecution and convictions were obtained in each case. There were 105 other samples taken of which 15 were reported to be adulterated. Among these were a blackcurrant wine containing not more than a negligible amount of blackcurrant juice, an Orange Drink containing neither orange pulp or orange juice, a nut butter cream which was 100% margarine, and various samples of jam reported to be seriously deficient of their proper fruit.

[illegible].

[illegible].

In 1939, diphtheria, measles and pneumonia were the chief causes of death from infectious disease. Measles reached epidemic prevalence in June, July and August, later than the usual seasonal incidence and fortunately so [illegible], occurring in [illegible] weather, catarrhal and pulmonary complications were moderate. Measles not being notifiable at the time, accurate figures of incidence and case mortality cannot be given. Later in the year (October 23rd) both measles and whooping cough became notifiable throughout the country by an order of the Minister of Health, (Measles and Whooping Cough Regulations, 1939) introduced as an emergency measure in view of the transfers of susceptible child populations under the Government evacuation schemes.

~~The incidence rates shown under the notifiable diseases are based on the 1938 estimates of the population, the figure for 1939 not being available.~~

SCARLET FEVER.

After a low incidence in previous years there was a sharp increase in 1939, 465 cases being notified compared with 268 in 1938.

Omitting 14 cases in which the diagnosis was revised, the net incidence was 451 or 3.1 per 1,000 of the population. 89% of the cases were treated in Hospital and the "return case" was 3.5%, an average figure. There was one death, giving a case mortality of 0.22, the majority of the cases being of a mild character.

DIPHTHERIA.

199 cases were notified in 1939. Deducting 23 in which the diagnosis was changed, the net incidence was 86 or 0.6 per 1,000 of the population compared with 135 or 0.8 per 1,000 in 1938 and 170 or 1.2 per 1,000 in 1937. This decrease may well be significant when it is considered that the severe virulent type of diphtheria infection is still being encountered.

ENTERIC FEVER (TYPHOID).

Three cases of enteric fever were notified. All were paratyphoid B infections, two occurring in one family and the other lived in a neighbouring street. The histories suggested that all three took ill about the same time. These findings indicated the probability of a common source of infection and a careful check was made of purveyors of food common to both families affected, personnel, particularly those concerned with distribution in the locality, being examined and in some cases tested as possible carriers but with negative results. No further cases arising, it was probable that the infection was a casual one imported into the area on some particular article of food.

MISCELLANEOUS.

There was no undue prevalence of influenza during the year. Two cases of anterior poliomyelitis were notified but the diagnosis was only confirmed in one case.

50 cases of erysipelas were notified, 17 being treated in hospital.

2 cases of cerebro-spinal fever were notified; both were treated in hospital with sulphapyridine and made good recoveries.

B O R O U G H H O S P I T A L.

624 cases were treated at the Borough Hospital in 1939, an increase of 58 on the previous year, 119 being accepted from other local authorities.

During the year, under the benefaction of Lord Nuffield, the hospital was presented with a Both respirator, for use in the treatment of paralysis of the breathing in cases of diphtheria and infantile paralysis. The apparatus was brought into use on two occasions (see Section on Diphtheria).

(a) SCARLET FEVER.

419 cases of Scarlet Fever were admitted, an increase of 111 compared with 1938 represented largely by the higher incidence of the disease in the town. The diagnosis was revised in 18 cases leaving a net total of 401.

The prevalent infection was of the mild type and with the routine use of sulphanilamide and antitoxin, serious complications were few. The death rate was 0.25%, the one fatal case being a subject with mitral stenosis who developed malignant endocarditis as a complication.

(b) DIPHTHERIA.

166 cases of diphtheria were treated, 34 less than 1938; 62 were from other authorities.

Although admissions were fewer than in 1938, there was a higher proportion of severe cases reflected in the incidence of paralysis and the average stay in hospital (46 days compared with 35 in 1938). It was noted that the severe virulent form was often associated with a coincident streptococcal infection, and such cases were given scarlet fever antitoxin as well as diphtheria antitoxin.

The diagnosis of diphtheria was revised in 2[illegible] of the 166 admissions and a further 10 were found to be "carriers" of the organism leaving a net total of 128 cases. There were 11 deaths again the case mortality rate 8.6% (compared with 7.6% in 1938). The cause of death in all cases was toxic myocarditis. In seven instances the patient succumbing within one week of admission, characteristic of the virulent type of diphtheria. Of the eleven fatal cases, four were admitted within three days of onset, three on the second day of the disease, two of whom died within [illegible] of admission despite intensive intravenous therapy. This shows that even early intravenous treatment may not save a patient from the highly virulent form of the disease.

(c) RESPIRATORY PARALYSIS.

There were three cases of respiratory paralysis, two of which had the benefit of treatment in the Both respirator, viz :-

(1) A boy of 5 years developed paralysis of the diaphragm on the 4[illegible] day of the disease. There were already present paralyses of the palate, face and pharynx and also evidence of myocarditis. Placed in the respirator, there was an improvement in the boy's condition and it was noted subsequently that he was temporarily removed from the respirator for nursing attention, he became distressed and cyanosed. Despite the assistance of the respirator, he died from heart failure after 21 hours in the machine.

(2) A boy of 17 years developed paralysis of the diaphragm on the 5[illegible] day of the disease, palate, facial and pharyngeal paralyses being already present. As he was breathing comfortably with his thoracic muscles he was not placed immediately in the respirator. [illegible] of acute heart failure and he was [illegible] 48 hours he had recovered from his cardiac collapse to a satisfactory condition. On the [illegible] his diaphragm was still quite well and he was out of the machine for 1[illegible] hours without discomfort. He was finally placed in the respirator on the 61st day and thereafter made a steady forward recovery. This boy [illegible] in his condition and treatment with the respirator, [illegible] the benefit he felt. It is certain he [illegible] without the help of the Both respirator but certainly [illegible] would have been very much against him.

Immunised Persons Admitted as Suffering from Diphtheria.

Six cases were admitted during the year with a history of having been immunised against Diphtheria. Investigation showed that two were not [illegible] for diphtheria. One was a boy of 5 years immunised six months previously, and admitted [illegible] after the onset. He recovered with only one slight complication. The other child of this age admitted so late in the disease could have a poor chance of recovery. In the other case, a girl of 5 years had a mild attack, complicated by tonsillitis which prolonged her stay in hospital.

Of the remainder, one case was a "carrier" [illegible] from diphtheria [illegible] Diphtheria.

DI[illegible] IMMUNISATION.

In 1938 the Health Committee acquired a copy of a diphtheria propaganda film entitled "Growing to Health and Happiness". This film, produced under the auspices of the Birmingham Health Department, is documentary in character illustrating the many activities of healthy children at play followed by examples of the dire effects of diphtheria as seen in actual patients. Finally 'shots' are shown of children being immunised and the simplicity and ease of this life-saving measure demonstrated. By courtesy of the management, the film was included in the programme of seven cinemas in the town for a period of a week each, both central and outlying districts being covered. The showing of the film was arranged to precede the issue of propaganda leaflets to parents through the Infant Schools. The film was well received by the public and although its influence cannot be measured directly in numbers of children immunised, it was found that parents, when subsequently approached, had a better understanding of the facilities being offered.

Owing to an increase in the work, special Immunisation Clinics were instituted at Park Lane and Lea Road Welfare Centres during the year.

The Immunisation Scheme apart from the facilities always available at each Welfare Centre throughout the year, includes an annual visit to each Infant School. The Summer term is the most suitable season when attendances are high and least interrupted by illness. It was found in 1937 that using Toxin-antitoxin mixture as the immunising agent which requires three injections at fortnightly intervals, the school campaign occupied both the summer and half of the autumn term. In 1938 alum-precipitated toxoid (which requires only two injections with an interval of a month) was brought into use with good results and in this way all but three Infant Departments were encompassed in the summer term. Unfortunately attendances in certain schools were seriously depleted owing to the measles epidemic so that a certain number of children missed the opportunity of immunisation.

A summary of immunisations carried out in the Infant Schools during 1939 shows that a total of 1,492 schoolchildren were immunised inclusive of 498 done at Welfare Centres, and adding 1,996 previously treated, 3,488 of the 5,425 children attending Infant Schools have been immunised, a percentage of 64 compared with 58 in 1938.

At Welfare Centres, 572 children under 5 years were immunised. This is an increase of 174 on the previous year and is satisfactory as far as it goes but when it is considered that over 2,000 children are born annually in the borough, there is plenty of scope for further effort and propaganda.

Schick tests were carried out six months after immunisation according to the scheme outlined in the last report and the results indicate that the two injection course of A.P.T. gives slightly better results than three injections of T.A.M. at fortnight intervals. 96.8% were immune after A.P.T. compared with 95.4% treated with T.A. It was also noted that A.P.T. with only a fortnight's interval gave less satisfactory results. Children found positive to the Schick test are given a further injection of 0.5 c.c. A.P.T. and subsequently retested after an interval of three months.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The incidence of tuberculosis continues to decline, 119 cases being notified compared with 165 in 1938, the decrease being most evident in the respiratory form of the disease; notifications of respiratory tuberculosis in males fell from 73 to 62 and in females, from 64 to 41. The maximum incidence in females was in the 15 - 25 years group and in males, between 45 and 55. Sixteen cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis were notified, a decrease of thirteen on the previous year. ~~[illegible]~~

VENEREAL DISEASES.

There was a decrease in both syphilis and gonorrhoea patients. There were 72 notifications of syphilis, a decrease of 6 males and 17 females from the 1938 figures, the total number under treatment being 216 compared with 242 in 1938.

Cases of gonorrhoea numbered 142 males and 66 females, a decrease of 21 and respectively, on the figures for the previous year, the total under treatment being 258.